1: Federal W-5 (no date) 1986
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
Georgia

from the draught. This was Preacher Little who, we were afterwards told, was an itinerant preacher, not a native to the island but a type native to the district.

His text, read in a loud, commanding voice, was "You ah the salt of the earth; but if the salt has lost its savory, wherewith shall it be salt; it is then no good and should be trompled intuh earth." The exposition of this pronouncement was awaited with breathless interest.

The sermon that followed, however, was in no way connected with the text. Preacher Little divided his sermon into three parts and lectured his congregation on "straying frum duh paat." What he said was not really coherent. Words stood out, phrases rang in our ears, quotations from the Bible resounded at random but that was the beginning and the end. The impelling element was the sound of Preacher Little's voice.

In each part he began slowly, quietly, persuading and reasoning with his congregation. His voice would carry a pleading question to them and they would answer, "Huh."[29] As he progressed, the quiet reasoning diminished; he shouted to his listeners. The "Huh—Huh's" became loud, guttural, vibrating grunts that echoed through the little building. Regular stamping of the feet began; the vibration penetrated into every corner. It was impossible not to think of the beating of the drum. The regular rhythmic, swelling noise was deafening. It meant agreement with Preacher Little. It urged him on to greater heights until his shouting voice not only seemed to fill the church but to reverberate from wall to wall. This climax was reached three times, at the end of each of the three parts of the sermon. Each time it seemed to act as a great emotional purge to the listeners and leave them happily exhausted.

When the sermon ended, spirituals were sung under the able direction of a young Negro named George Smith.* The

* *George Smith, Sapelo Island and Brunswick.*

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
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be for that of an elderly person who had acquired many friends and relatives over the years.

The Sea Island churches are the mainstay of the community and are always full of life, vigor, and energy. Many of them have long and illustrious histories. The Hebrew United Presbyterian Church on Johns Island, for example, was organized in 1868 after the white Presbyterian church no longer admitted blacks to worship at its services or in its building. The blacks held services in a bush tent until a new building could be put together out of lumber left on Seabrook and Kiawah beaches by a shipwreck. At the time the island could be reached only by boat, and according to the church historian, the organizing members gathered the wood, put it on a raft, and floated it to the construction site.

Brick Church, located on St. Helena Island, is a Baptist church with an even longer history. It was constructed by slaves for their masters in 1855. In 1862 the slaves, who had been permitted to worship in the balcony, took over the church when the white masters fled the island during the Civil War. Before Penn School (the first normal industrial and agricultural school for the education of blacks in South Carolina) was erected in 1864, the school's founder, Laura Towne, held classes in this church. An elegant two-story structure, Brick Church has been standing firm and serene for more than a century on the grounds of what is now Penn School Center.[53]

The Sea Island church services are lively and enthusiastic. At a good Baptist or African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Sunday morning service, the singing and praising will be audible for many miles. If there is a pianist, drummer, guitarist, or tambourinist, the service is even more energetic. The musical instruments are secondary, however, to the congregation's expressions of joy through handclapping, handshaking, and general rocking and swaying. It is literally impossible to attend these services and not be moved to participate actively. Even the smallest child attempts to move in time to the beat of the songs. The rhythm is also a very important part of the sermons. The minister uses many rhetorical devices to involve his congregation in the service, chief of which is the repetition of words and phrases at the beginning and end of each statement (see Chapter 3). The parishioners are mesmerized by the flow, rhythm, and steady recurrence of the repetitions, and their responses keep the service alive and active.

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
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Often the test of a good Sea Island minister is how well he can arouse and excite his parishioners. Most of the ministers are from the area and know well the rhetorical skills and techniques necessary to keep a congregation involved in the service. From the time when young children begin going to the church services, they learn that rhetorical skills are to be praised, practiced, and deeply venerated as essential characteristics of learned people. Learning, to the islanders, does not necessarily mean college education. Most of the Sea Island ministers have had no formal education at all, yet they could equal and surpass the most prolific expositors of the canons of rhetoric. For example, though this speaker has never heard of Cicero or studied the classical theories of rhetoric, note the unusual skill with which he makes his plea to the congregation, creating the long, flowing, masterfully constructed phrases characteristic of Ciceronian style:

Heavenly Father
Look at Reverend Pinckney one more time
Who is going to unfold the word of eternal truth
Want you to please, dear Jesus
Give him a silver trumpet
[So] he can coax and call some more ushers into this fold
And then, then, then, my Master
Look at the mistress of ceremonies
Jesus
Want you to plant her feet deep down in the soil, Master
Where she'll never be [up]rooted by the storm of life[54]

Often when a sermon is completed, the minister will begin to sing. It is essential for a Sea Island minister to be a good singer as well as a good speaker. Singing is a regular part of the islanders' daily lives. Many older people sing with fervor and passion as they work in their gardens or in the fields, even when they are alone. Singing is thought to be good for the body, the spirit, and the soul: it enlivens the spirit, which permeates the soul, giving it spiritual strength, and the soul in turn revitalizes the body with physical strength to carry on in times of despair or when physically exhausted. During the church services singing often stirs and excites an already "happy" congregation. When the music begins, some of the congregants throw up their hands, jerking and shaking their bodies in the movements of the shout. The music

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
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3

The Texts

539 The Prayers

My knee ben down on cold cold floor!

782 539 The prayers are the most creative and expressive form of Sea Island oratory. Like the tales, they are composed and delivered within a set tradition, but the success of the delivery is dependent not only on what the speaker says but also on the eloquence and rhetorical skill with which he says it. To the Sea Island congregation, outstanding rhetorical skills are attributes to be praised, practiced, and deeply venerated as essential characteristics of learned people. The learned people, however, are frequently those without much academic background. Without a doubt, many of the best expositors of the prayer tradition have little, if any, formal education. Their prayers, nevertheless, are composed in a tradition of impassioned eloquence. They embody Ciceronian, Quintilianesque, and other ornaments of style capable of creating belief, inspiring, and passionately persuading a congregation to respond with raucous and joyous replies.[1]

Both men and women, but only those known to be carriers of the prayer-giving tradition, pray at specified times during the church service. The member called on will kneel and pray publicly without pausing, stuttering, or searching for words for as long as twenty-five minutes, depending on the occasion for the prayer. The ability to pray is considered a "gift" like the ability to sing or play the piano. Those gifted with the technique are singled out when they are very young and encouraged to practice speaking in the church at special feasts, weddings, or holidays, especially Easter and Christmas. As children they learn only to speak the words; as adults they know how to speak them with the compassion that comes only from experience. Others may

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
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acquire the ability to join in the words of prayer, but only those who have the gift can move the congregation to shout out a response.

None of the prayers are written, and herein lies much of their inventiveness. Many rival T. S. Eliot's *Wasteland* in elaborate allusions to works of literature. The most effective ones are alive with imagery, maxims, puns, understatements, and cultural references which the audience understands and responds to enthusiastically. More important, the prayers are filled with devices used judiciously throughout to induce the rhythmic incantation that is imperative to the Sea Island prayer tradition. Alliteration, transplacement, interplacement, epanaphora (repetition of words or phrases at the beginning of successive clauses), and other features create pleasing recurrent sounds which stir, stimulate, and evoke verbal responses from the audience. Epanaphoric passages—for example, "I want to be the child of God! / and I want my sins forgiven / I want my spirit meek and mild / and I want to go to Heaven when I die"—add to the beauty of the prayers and also demonstrate the speaker's skill as a rhetorician. The echoes of words and phrases in the audience's responses attest to the community's respect and admiration for skillful and creative use of language:

> Master, it's no lower *No! No lower!*
> Could I come this evening
> Excepting my knees are down at the floor *Floor! Cold floor!*
> Guilty heart within
> Crying guilty and already condemned *Condemned!*

Alliteration is used, as in "coax and call," "cold, cold hearts," and "Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove," to help establish the rhythm, as well as to contribute to the enthusiastic and energetic tone of the entire delivery.

The strong rhythm and chanted delivery of the prayers accords with the prayer traditions of many African and African-derived cultures, including those of West Africa, the West Indies, and South America. The rhythmic chants are crucial to the developmental flow of the prayers.[2] Once the rhythm is established, it is maintained through various means, most important of which is the reply from the listeners. Some truly impressive prayer givers excite an audience to maximal response through their energetic diction and explosive tone alone. Others may intensify the rhythmic effect by drumming with a chair, tapping a cane against the floor, or just swaying back and forth in time to some inaudible sound.[3]

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
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It has been suggested that some respondents in African-American congregations may not understand or actually accept what the speaker says but respond instead to the highly contagious cadence established by the call from the speaker and response from the audience.[4] This observation may be justified in part: one may not be stimulated to respond to the message in the prayer, but it is difficult if not impossible to ignore the rhythm with which the prayer is delivered. Without a doubt, however, some congregants listen carefully to every detail—not only to receive the message but because, seeing that the prayers are not written, potential prayer givers must be attentive in order to learn the art of the prayer tradition.

Perpetuating this tradition is made easier by the formulaic element in their arrangement. They usually begin with a quotation from the Bible, a poem, or, more traditionally, some lines from the Lord's Prayer. The speaker usually has no prior knowledge that he will be asked to pray. Thus, the quotation gives him time to organize his thoughts and prepare himself to deliver an effective prayer. He is at liberty to alter a quotation to his own specification and often the alteration is more effective than the original. For example, the lines "For thine is the kingdom / The power and the glory" may be improved to "O Lord, that thine may be our kingdom / We expecting your kingdom to be / [a] poor sinner['s] glory!"

After the quotation, the speaker begins his personal prayer, a structured oration with a proem, line of appeal, and peroration. The proem opens with a rhetorical salutation to God commensurate with the solemnity of the occasion. It permits the speaker to express his humility as a servant of God, using such words as *mutable* and *impermanent*. The speaker does not presume to be as fortunate as the "foxes of the forest" or "the birds of the air." He projects himself as a mere waif asking for mercy with his knees bent in supplication:

> Master Jesus, hear me
> Another one of you[r] servant
> Bow this evening, Jesus
>
> Sin anguished and bended
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Crying to you this evening, Jesus
> For Mercy
>
> While mercy can reach [us]

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
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[539]

As you say the foxes of the forest
Got hole

And then the birds of the air has nest
Master, we are poor son of man

Nowhere to lay down weary head

The rhythm and tone are usually set in the speaker's salutation to God, after which the speaker begins his appeal. This plea is in the form of an itemized list. The number of requests will depend on the occasion and the number of items concerning which the speaker is asking for consideration. If he makes an appeal for himself, he usually includes it as the very last item in his list. Each appeal will often begin with a traditional expression, such as "Then, then, my God! We ask . . ." or "O! You, you this evening, my heavenly Father, we ask . . ." The pleas are likewise concluded with a traditional expression, like "Have Mercy if thou on us so please!" In addition to clarifying the organization of the prayers, these phrases, perhaps more than others, help to sustain the increasing force and rhythm.

The peroration may vary. Most prayers, however, end with the quotation "Somewhere Lord, Job declare / The weak shall cease in trouble and the soul find rest."

782 The Sea Islanders have prayers for every occasion. They may range from a one-minute request for assistance in the completion of a hard day of labor to a twenty-five-minute eulogy for a lost loved one. The first prayer quoted below was delivered for the 1980 Usher's Anniversary at New Jerusalem AME Church on Wadmalaw Island, South Carolina, and is typical of most Sea Island prayers for special occasions. In this case there was a scheduled prayer giver, but the person who actually spoke did so without notice when the scheduled speaker proved unavailable.[5] A brief outline of the prayer is included to demonstrate the smoothness and cohesiveness with which the parts develop into the whole:

I. Formal opening

II. The Lord's Prayer

III. Proem: speaker's personal prayer of humility

Master Jesus, hear me
Another one of you[r] servant

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
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782 IV. Appeals

A. Father, we down here this evening
Heavenly Father
Asking for your mercy

B. We want you to come in this building
One more time

C. We ask you to please strengthen us
Where we are weak
And build us where we are tearing down

D. We ask you to look at the leaders
From one to another, Jesus
Make them ushers of sound judgment
Then truly devoted to God

E. I want you to bless each and every usher
Jesus
Help them to please hold out and hold on

F. Look at Reverend Pinckney one more time

G. Look at the mistress of ceremonies
Jesus

H. Want you to look at Jerusalem one more time

I. [Look at] me too

V. Peroration

Somewhere, Lord, Job declare
The wicked must cease in trouble
And my soul have rest
'Tis thy servant's prayer, Master!

782 195 [193] The social setting in which a prayer of this sort is delivered contributes to the development of bilingual skills for many Gullah speakers. This prayer, like most others, contains few features characteristic of contemporary Gullah speech, such as the use of the preverbal markers *de*, *ben*, *bina*, and *don* and the omission of inflectional markers. There is a good reason for the absence of these and other features in this text. A prayer of this type is composed in a tradition of rhetorical [537]

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
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eloquence and skill. Thus the speech is expected to be elevated and elaborate while retaining certain syntactic and phonological features characteristic of the community language. Many prayers are composed of hymns, Scriptures, spirituals, and traditional expressions, reflecting both biblical concepts and the black experience. Accordingly, the vocabulary, syntax, and phrasing do not necessarily represent those of the person praying, but may be words and phrasing he has heard and stored in his memory over the years. Again, the learned prayer givers are most often those "gifted" in the art, with little formal training. The important factors are that the person have a good memory, be able to join beautifully constructed phrases together spontaneously, and be able to establish a chanting rhythm which can be easily sustained by the reply from the audience. While the text alone is intelligible on paper, most of the beauty of the prayer escapes, along with the force of the audience's reply and the increasing fervor of the speaker's call.

Opening Prayer for the Usher's Anniversary

Mr. James Brown
New Jerusalem AME Church
Wadmalaw Island, South Carolina
13 July 1980

Our Father, who art in heaven
Hallowed be thy name
Thy kingdom come, O Lord
Let thy holy and righteous
will be done on this earth
As you will was already done in heaven
Give us, Lord, this day
As our daily bread
You forgive those who have sin
And trespass against us *Amen*
Lead us not into sin, neither temptation
But, please deliver us from evil *Yes!*

O Lord, that thine may be our kingdom
We expecting your kingdom to be
[A] poor sinner['s] glory *Oh yeah!*

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
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Chapter 3

1. The prayers are often presented in a chanting style difficult for non-Gullah speakers to understand. Thus I gratefully acknowledge the aid of Mrs. Ida Morris-Hamilton of Wadmalaw Island for helping with transcriptions and translations.

2. See Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy;* Harold Carter, *The Prayer Tradition of Black People* (Valley Forge, Pa.: Judson Press, 1976); William H. Pipes, *Say Amen Brother* (New York: William Federal Press, 1951); and Jones-Jackson, "Oral Tradition."

3. The prayers are normally accompanied by music. If no musical accompanist is available, the prayer giver and the congregation create their own musical accompaniment with handclaps, shuffles, and moans.

4. See Carter, *Prayer Tradition;* Pipes, *Say Amen Brother;* and Molefe Asante, *African and African-American Communication Continuities* (New York: Council of International Studies, State University of New York at Buffalo, 1975).

5. This prayer was delivered impromptu by Mr. James Brown, who is known for his ability to deliver stirring words with absolutely no prior preparation. I am grateful to him and Rev. Renty Pinckney for permitting me to record this prayer during church services. I am likewise grateful to Rev. Chester R. Jones for his comments on my analysis of the prayer. I owe special thanks to Rev. Alfred Owens of Greater Mt. Calvary Holy Church, Washington, D.C., for his invaluable assistance in providing references for the many biblical allusions in the prayer. All references are to the King James Version.

6. Ps. 51, David's cry for repentance and mercy, may have been a model for this passage.

7. Matt. 8:20; Luke 9:58.

8. Rom. 6:12, 8:11; 1 Cor. 15:53–54; John 15:1.

9. Matt. 4:3; 1 Thess. 3:5.

10. John 1:32.

11. Phil. 3:13.

12. Ps. 1:14.

13. John 12:2, 25:4.

14. 2 Cor. 7:5.

15. The speaker adapts his prayer to fit the occasion by including the purpose for which he is offering his prayer in strategic places. Many of the following passages are based on the Sermon on the Mount and the Beatitudes; the speaker brings them into his prayer as responses (e.g., "Want my spirit meek and mild").

16. The minister is often considered the assembler and leader of the community as well as of the church. Thus, like Moses, he is viewed as a deliverer of the people, one chosen by God to be the inheritor of the silver trumpet. See Num. 10:1–10.

17. This is a rural expression of the idea from Matt. 7:24–29 that whosoever builds his house on solid rock shall not be moved by the storms of life.

18. Jerusalem is not only the holy biblical city but, literally, the name of the AME church in which this prayer was delivered.

4: Carawan & Carawan B,Z-5 (1959-1988) 1989
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South Carolina
Johns Island

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Mr. Benjamin Bligen

A SERMON: LET NOT THEM THAT EAT DESPISE

I'm not gonna tarry before you, Warriors. I'm glad to be here to mingle my voice among my sisters and brothers. I hope and trust that if this sermon don't do you any good, I hope it won't do you no harm.

You know you can go from one part of the Bible to the other. God say we should love one another. Let not them that eat despise them that eat not. Let us remember one another. Don't let us be like Dives now. Let us try to be just as Lazarus. Dives despised the poor. Lazarus went and ask just for a crumb that fall from the table, and before Dives had the passion on him to give, he call the dog on him. But the poor beast have compassion and lick Lazarus.

Time going pass and go on. Time come along when the poor man die. He went on home to God and been at rest. Rich man Dives die, and his home was in Hell. When he lift up his eye in Hell and saw Lazarus in Heaven, he began to memorize. He know he didn't do right, but he cries, "Oh Father, let Lazarus come and dip his finger in the water and cool my trials and trouble."

God says, "No. You had all the good times, plenty of money. You didn't need Lazarus at that time. You need him now, but it too late."

Dives say, "I got five brother. Just give me a chance that I may go back and tell them to get their heart right, that they may shun this torment place I'm in."

And He say, "No. I got Moses and I got the prophets; let them hear what they say. If they don't believe the prophets, they won't believe you, Dives."

Pray for me, Warriors. Let us sing like we singing for the last time. Let us pray like we are praying for the last time. Take no thought for tomorrow, for tomorrow the sun may shine on your grave. Jesus told us to dig deep and lay your foundation on a solid rock, that when the storm of life blow against you, you're gonna find your Father rock. If you dwell upon Him, everythin' will be all right. The world can't do you no harm.

9: Parrish B-4,5 (ca.1916-1941) 1942
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Georgia
St. Simon's Island

How are you, brother?" The reply is: "So-so, Granman. How are you, brother?" The writer explains that "It does not do to claim that one is feeling too well, otherwise the enmity of the spirits might be incurred." From this it can be seen why there was a wide divergence between Lowman's words and his performance, and also why our older Negroes always appear to enjoy poor health.

Another tradition caused me to be embarrassed for the poor preacher, who seemed to have a strange affliction. I furtively looked around to see how the younger members of the congregation were taking the curious performance. Their matter-of-course attitude should have made me less innocent. However, it was not until I heard other preachers give the same effect—the mewing of a harassed cat combined with the bark of a half-strangled dog—that I realized my ludicrous mistake. At the peak of the preacher's harangue the words pour out so fast that he has no time to get his breath, and his gasping efforts cause the outrageous sounds that appear to have no name with us, but which are described by Martha Beckwith, in *Black Roadways*, under the name of "trooping." [23] She believes that the exercise "if persisted in, will produce that semiconscious condition so favorable to the communication of spirits." But it has always seemed to me that religious ecstasy is itself the source of the strange manifestation. When the preacher has reached his rhythmical best; when an insistent tapping of toes on the floor provides an under-current of sound along with a feeling of uncanny suspense; when the "moaning" (as the peculiarly beautiful humming of the Negroes is called) takes on an elemental quality that comes from everywhere and from nowhere in particular—then the snapping point is reached for someone, and you hear a piercing shriek. A woman stands up with stark, stiff arms stretched high above her head. If she makes much of a commotion she is supported into the open air to recover. When I was a little child I saw a woman who had gone into this rigid state carried to a pump beside the church, where, under the spout, she was quickly brought to her senses. In the House of Prayer in Savannah (where the pillars are thickly padded, and the sawdust is inches deep on the floor) I saw a "lone shouter" fall into a trance that lasted half

[23] *It is possible that the tradition was carried to Jamaica by Elder George Lisle, the former slave of Mr. Sharp, a loyalist of Savannah, who gave him his liberty. Lisle preached in Georgia during the Revolution. At the close of the war he went to Jamaica. Though an ex-slave, he organized, in Kingston in 1784, the first Baptist church on the island, and became "the chief human factor in the salvation of Jamaica." (L. G. Jordan, Negro Baptist History in the United States.)*

9: Parrish B-4,5 (ca.1916-1941) 1942
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St. Simon's Island

763 764 171 spot long enough to find out many fascinating things about Africa's black residents, mentions the fact that "In the cold wet months it is inconvenient to have . . . a [funeral] feast, and if some one dies at that time of year, the feast is often postponed until the dry season."

793 796 539 Negro preachers—particularly those who possess good voices and a store of spicy proverbs—often deliver sermons and offer prayers that stick in the mind. One I heard in Liberty County (the one whom I thought afflicted) expatiated on the subject of sin. He made it clear that certain types were worse than others. "Sin is a mean thing," and his tone was scornful; but when he said: "Self is a terrible thing!" it was thunderous and convincing. In a barn of a church in Camden County the substance of the preacher's prayer was in these touchingly earnest words: "We're down here, Lord, chewin' on dry bones an' swallerin' bitter pills. We can't do nothin' without You." Whatever may be said about the emotional character of the religion of our American Negro, it must be conceded that his sins are of the flesh rather than the spirit. He is generous with his last crust, and there would be no need of orphanages if white people, in proportion to their means, adopted as many children as colored people.

771 181

175 569 191 When it comes to terse economy of speech we are obliged to concede that no one can equal the Negro. Mrs. Annie Arnold, born on St. Simon's in 1844, gave me the perfect example of this fact in recounting a bit of local history. A cargo of slaves of the Ebo tribe had been landed at a suspiciously secluded spot on the west side of the island. They preferred death to a life of captivity, and as they walked into the water the leader said: "The water brought us here. The water will take us away." No one but an African could have expressed such poignant unhappiness in so few words. In view of the fact known to traders that the Ebo men made poor slaves and were prone to suicide,[35] the account is probably true. The Negroes believe the story, and to this day they have to be extremely hungry to fish by themselves at Ebo Landing. One night a few years ago some colored boys braved tradition, and went 'possum hunting in the neighborhood. I have my own ideas as to the real cause of their terrifying experience, but the fact remains that no others have been tempted to repeat it.

175 569

Sir Charles Lyell tells us that "The slave trade ceased in 1796, and but few negroes were smuggled into Georgia from foreign countries, except indirectly for

[35] For this reason as few as possible were accepted by the traders.

9: Parrish B-4,5 (ca.1916-1941) 1942
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Georgia
St. Simon's Island

MY GOD IS A ROCK IN A WEARY LAND

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This song belongs to the exhorting-sermon type which has an African counterpart. The old-time preacher rhythmically chanted his sermon; at effective intervals he broke into song, in which he was joined by the congregation.

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Chorus: My God is a rock in a weary land
weary land
in a weary land
My God is a rock in a weary land
Shelter in a time of storm.

Ah know He is a rock in a weary land
weary land
in a weary land
Ah know He is a rock in a weary land
Shelter in a time of storm.

Stop let me tell you 'bout the Chapter One
When the Lord God's work has jus' begun
Stop and let me tell you 'bout the Chapter Two
When the Lord God's written his Bible through
Stop and let me tell you 'bout the Chapter Three
When the Lord God died on Calvary.

Chorus: An' Ah know He is a rock in a weary land
weary land
in a weary land
Ah know He is a rock in a weary land
Shelter in a time of storm.

Stop and let me tell you 'bout the Chapter Four
Lord God visit 'mong the po'
Stop and let me tell you 'bout the Chapter Five
Lord God brought the dead alive
Stop and let me tell you 'bout the Chapter Six
He went in Jerusalem and healed the sick.

(repeat chorus)

Stop and let me tell you 'bout Chapter Seven
Died and risen and went to Heaven
Stop and let me tell you 'bout the Chapter Eight
John seen Him standin' at the Golden Gate
Stop and let me tell you 'bout the Chapter Nine
Lord God turned the water to wine
Stop and let me tell you 'bout the Chapter Ten
John says He's comin' in the world again.

(repeat chorus)